WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An apparatus for use in a hybrid fiber coax (HFC) network to provide the HFC forward path spectrum from the head end to a network fiber node, the apparatus comprising:

a head end modulator directly receiving a switchable digital data signal and internally processing the switchable digital data signal to produce the HFC forward path spectrum that directly drives the network fiber node.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the head end modulator generates an analog optical signal for the network fiber node.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the head end modulator processes the switchable digital data signal to dynamically allocate bandwidth to different services.

4. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the switchable digital data signal is received in the form of a 1GigE signal.

5. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the switchable digital data signal is received in the form of a 10GigE signal.

6. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the switchable digital data signal is received as a single digital data signal input.

7. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the switchable digital data signal is received as a plurality of digital data signal inputs.

8. A method for use in a hybrid fiber coax (HFC) network to provide the HFC forward path spectrum from the head end to a network fiber node, the method comprising:

directly receiving a switchable digital data signal at a head end modulator; and

processing the switchable digital data signal, at the head end modulator, to produce the HFC forward path spectrum that directly drives the network fiber node.

9. The method of claim 8 further comprising:

generating an analog optical signal, with the head end modulator, for the network fiber node.

10. The method of claim 8 wherein the head end modulator processes the switchable digital data signal to dynamically allocate bandwidth to different services.

11. The method of claim 8 wherein the switchable digital data signal is received in the form of a 1GigE signal.

12. The method of claim 8 wherein the switchable digital data signal is received in the form of a 10GigE signal.

13. The method of claim 8 wherein the switchable digital data signal is received as a single digital data signal input.

14. The method of claim 8 wherein the switchable digital data signal is received as a plurality of digital data signal inputs.

15. A system for use in a hybrid fiber coax (HFC) network to provide the HFC forward path spectrum from the head end to a plurality of network fiber nodes, the system comprising:

a plurality of head end modulators, each modulator directly receiving a switchable digital data signal and internally processing the switchable digital data signal to produce the HFC forward path spectrum that directly drives an associated network fiber node,

wherein each individual modulator processes its received switchable digital data signal to dynamically allocate bandwidth to different services to provide an essentially narrow cast approach among the plurality of modulators.

16. The system of claim 15 wherein each head end modulator generates an analog optical signal for the associated network fiber node.

17. The system of claim 15 wherein the switchable digital data signal is received in the form of a 1GigE signal.

18. The system of claim 15 wherein the switchable digital data signal is received in the form of a 10GigE signal.

19. The system of claim 15 wherein the switchable digital data signal is received as a single digital data signal input.